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# Rock on in Negril

## Warm up with a quick Jamaica getaway

By **HAUSHEEN SHAH**

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We don't blame you for trying to escape NYC this time of year. Between post-holiday stress, the monthlong Christmas tree graveyard and the sub-zero wind chill, the idea of letting it snow in the city just isn't appealing anymore.

We've found a solution — the perfect weekend getaway where "everything irie" and you won't need another vacay from your vacay — Negril, Jamaica. We know what you're thinking: tourist central, all-inclusive bargain hotels, families galore, pointed greenery. Yes, there is that side if that's what you're into, but just up from the Seven Mile Beach lies the rocky territory. The Cliffs, as this area is known, are perfect for a boho chic holiday. One love.



Dine cliffside at the Rockhouse.

**STAY**

The **Rockhouse** boutique hotel (winter rates from \$160, [rockhousehotel.com](http://rockhousehotel.com)) stretches dramatically across the cliffs of Pristine Cove on 8 acres of tropical gardens. For a truly luxurious experience, get a premium villa (\$465 in winter) — with its private outdoor shower — perched on the water's edge. Steps away, you can dive off the bridge (connecting the villas to the rest of the hotel) into the clear aquamarine water or snorkel along the picturesque reef. Massages are performed cliff-side, dolphins

leap pool-side and delectable dining is always enjoyed outside. The hotel is built from locally quarried cut stones (hence the name) and runs a foundation to build local schools in the community ([rockhousefoundation.org](http://rockhousefoundation.org)).

If you're craving a little sand time, the hotel offers a shuttle service to the private beach of **Idle Awhile** resort located on the Seven Mile Beach (winter rates from \$220, [idleawhile.com](http://idleawhile.com)). And just in case the popular Rockhouse is unavailable, other lodging options include **the Caves** (winter rates from \$500, [islandoutpost.com/the\\_caves](http://islandoutpost.com/the_caves)) or **Tensing Pen** (winter rates from \$150, [tensingpen.com](http://tensingpen.com)).

**EAT**

For jerk goodness and a side of bammy (traditional Jamaican flatbread), hit up the Rockhouse's hotel restaurant or its newer **Pushcart** restaurant and rum bar, inspired by the street food of Jamaica and located right next door at Pirates Cave. If it's true rustic, local cuisine you're craving, we recommend **Three Dives** ([maherconsulting.com/3dives](http://maherconsulting.com/3dives)) for the curry goat, **Erica's** for the best jerk lobster, **De Bar** for proper street-BBQ jerk chicken and **Sips and Bites** for a traditional Jamaican breakfast. Other more "upscale" dining options include **Ivan's at Catcha**, **Falling Star** ([catchajamaica.com](http://catchajamaica.com)), the **Lodge at Tensing Pen** and **Hungry Lion**.

**DRINK**

While most restaurants and hotels offer cozy bars overlooking crashing waves, **Rick's Café** ([rickscafejamaica.com](http://rickscafejamaica.com)) at sunset can also be quite entertaining. Touristy it may be, but between the insane cliff divers and the jammin' reggae bands, Rick's is worth a pre-dinner drinks stopover. Or for a different kind of adventure with your beer, check out **Floyd's Pelican Bar** ([floydspelicanbar.com](http://floydspelicanbar.com)). You'll need a fisherman's boat to transport you to this "shack" in the sea.

**SEE**

Even though you could be thoroughly content sunbathing by the pool while sipping on umbrella-garnished cocktails, take the time to explore what the terrains of Jamaica have to offer. To ease you into vacation mode, start by taking a tour of the oldest rum producer in the Caribbean (260 years!) — **Appleton Rum Estate** ([appletonestate.com](http://appletonestate.com)). The 30-minute tour takes you through the rum-making process from both a historic and current perspective and finishes with sampling some of the product. And if you feel like chasing waterfalls, then check out **YS Falls** ([ysfalls.com](http://ysfalls.com)) — a superior alternative to the other tourist photo-bombed falls. A series of 10 waterfalls on the YS River located about 90 minutes from the Rockhouse, here you can swing on ropes and swim into the cave beneath the falls. Best to visit YS early in the morning before the tour buses start to arrive.

If you miss Negril immediately after you leave, you can get a little taste of it — minus the weather — at NYC's Miss Lily's restaurant, where partners include Rockhouse owner Paul Salmon. That will have to be enough to tide you over until you return.

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